



MIAMI BEACH

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER
NO. LTC # 019-2006

LETTER TO COMMISSION

TO: Mayor David Dermer and Members of the City Commission

FROM: Jorge M. Gonzalez, City Manager

DATE: January 23, 2006

SUBJECT: BI-WEEKLY UPDATE—January 2-20, 2006

The purpose of this LTC is to provide you with an update describing some of the areas the Administration has recently been focusing on:

Building Official Recruitment Process and Departmental Retreat — Since the Building Assessment Center Process on December 8, 2005, I have continued to evaluate and move forward on the recruitment efforts for City's next Building Director. During the week of January 2nd, I, along with Assistant City Manager Tim Hemstreet, met with the three candidates for individual interviews in order to ask more in-depth questions regarding their background and experience and well as gain a better sense of who would be the best fit for our fast-growing organization.

The Building Department Retreat took place on January 5, 2006. This retreat focused on the department's role in the City's overall strategic plan as well as the department's achievements over the past year and areas for improvement.

Public-Private Development Project — Staff and I met regarding a previous developer's interest in a public- private development project at 13th Street and Collins Avenue on January 4, 2006.

Fire Department — The Miami Beach Fire Department recently trained crews from the Miami-Dade County Fire Department on Rapid Intervention Drills. A total of 63 Miami-Dade County units were involved. The training program coordinated by Lieutenant Scott Todd and Firefighter Neil Chapman of Fire Station No. 2.

The City of Miami Fire Department and Village of Key Biscayne Fire Department have already expressed interest in attending the training at a future date. The City's Fire Department is currently negotiating with the Orange County Fire Department a training exchange by which the City of Miami Beach will conduct Rapid Intervention Training for Orange County, and in return, they will provide our officers with Incident Command training which involves the use of a video and computer based simulation module.

Labor Relations – Staff and I continue to work with the CWA in order to address issues of mutual concern in resolving the current CWA contract approved by the City Commission. As of January 19, 2006, a tentative agreement has been reached with the CWA, and we anticipate a ratification vote in early February, in time for the February 8th City Commission meeting. I have also started to prepare for the Fraternal Order of Police contract negotiations.

Police Department — On Tuesday, January 3, 2006, Command Staff of the Miami Beach Police Department attended a Labor Relations meeting with Linda Gonzalez regarding the upcoming Fraternal Order of Police contract negotiations.

On Thursday, January 12, Chief De Lucca attended the Dade County Chiefs Association Awards Committee meeting where the Officer of the Year for Miami-Dade County was nominated. On this same date, Chief De Lucca also attended a meeting with Director Grimming of the Miami-Dade College North Campus School of Justice to discuss the possibility of sending Miami Beach Police Department recruits to the Miami-Dade Community College Police Academy.

Urban Environment League and Miami Beach Community Development Corporation (MBCDC) Housing Development Workshop— Due to the City's proactive response to the affordable housing issue I was asked form part of a public policy panel discussion on January 18, 2006. I, along with City of Miami Mayor Manny Diaz and Assistant County Manager Tony Crap, formed the public policy panel, and spoke regarding innovative ideas and opportunities which can be pursued to address the issue of affordable housing.

Colony Theater —The Colony Theater renovations are now substantially complete and the theater received a Temporary Certificate of Occupancy on January 17, 2006. The contractor will continue working on outstanding items in order to obtain the Certificate of Occupancy.

Major Events Plan (MEP) — The level of activity over the past weeks reflects the continuous work by the Administration in planning and mitigating the effects of multiple events and productions throughout our City. Following are a few highlights of important events and productions being addressed by the Tourism and Cultural Development Department along with staff at the department and executive level:

- The **29th Annual Art Deco Weekend** took place from January 13-15, 2006. This year with its theme of *Puttin' on the Ritz*, the event celebrated the pageantry of 1930s hotel and restaurant architecture and great cinema spectacles. This year was by all accounts the most successful Art Deco Festival in years. The theme of Art Deco Weekend 2006 was chosen in part to complement a major exhibition at The Wolfsonian-FIU which will feature *In Pursuit of Pleasure: Schultze & Weaver and the American Hotel*, which promises to be a provocative exploration of American hotels in the early 20th Century. Art Deco Weekend included more than 85 events around Miami Beach and spanned nearly 10 blocks along picturesque Ocean Drive - the historic Art Deco District, also known as the American Riviera.
- **ING Miami Tropical Marathon:** For the fourth year, the 26.2-mile ING Miami Tropical Marathon is scheduled to take place on January 29, 2006, with a course beginning at the American Airlines Arena, and run through the City of Miami Beach, City of Miami and Miami-Dade County.

Outreach to affected neighborhoods such as Palm, Star, Hibiscus Islands, South Pointe, the Venetian Islands, Ocean Drive and Collins Park Neighborhood Associations has already been completed. Additionally, marathon producers will be distributing door hanger notices to all affected areas. A final neighborhood meeting will take place on January 24, 2006 at 5:30 pm at the Tourism and Cultural Development conference room to discuss the marathon.

The Miami Beach Police Department will implement a comprehensive traffic plan which will include over 50 police officers, volunteers and numerous detour signs in an effort to maintain the flow of traffic throughout the City.

- **Miami International Boat Show:** Planning efforts for the Miami International Boat Show continue. Convention Center Drive will be closed beginning February 9th for move-in and will reopen February 23rd at 5pm. The event will run from February 16-20, 2006.
- **Comedy Festival:** The 1st Annual Bud Light South Beach Comedy Festival ran from January 18 – 21, 2006. The Colony Theater served as the primary venue for the festival which hosted 8 performances throughout the weekend. Performances also take place at the Jackie Gleason Theater, Byron Carlyle, and Gusman Theater. The City partnered with the Comedy Festival to provide free outdoor performances in Lincoln Road at the Euclid Oval throughout the weekend as well.

Film and Print— Film and Event Production Management staff is working with producers of a commercial for an Argentinean rum commercial on Ocean Drive featuring Latin pop star, Paulina Rubio.

Finally, staff has also been working with City of Miami and Miami-Dade County Film Offices to lure the filming of Warner Brothers television pilot Aquaman, as well as the television series.

Muss Park Playground Ribbon Cutting — On January 18th, the Parks and Recreation Department hosted the ribbon cutting for the new playground at Muss Park.

5th Street & Alton Development Project (Potamkin Site) —City staff and developers continued to discuss construction costs for the project on January 20, 2006.

Cirque du Soleil — From January 12-14, 2006, I traveled to Montreal with Assistant City Managers Hilda Fernandez and Tim Hemstreet as well as Commissioner Simon Cruz in order to continue to explore options and to see from a production standpoint the level of detail and time that is invested by Cirque du Soleil in creating a new show.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact me.

JMG/dm

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